GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2341
ANSWERED ON:29.08.2007
BAN ON USE OF MERCURY
Verma Shri Ravi Prakash

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is the second largest user of mercury which figures on the top of the list of deadly contaminants considered as a serious hazard to health environment;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the European Union Parliament has adopted a resolution to ban mercury trade;

(d) if so, whether various Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) have urged the Union Government to ban import of mercury and phase out its usage in the country;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the steps taken by the Union Government to ban the use of mercury in the country?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS)

(a) & (b) According to Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), China and India are the largest consumers of Mercury with China using 1000-1500 tonnes and India using 300-500 tonnes annually. The mercury is used in various industries like chlor alkali plants as well as various health care products like dental amalgam, BP instruments and thermometer.There are number of studies reported world wide, which suggested that exposure to Mercury results in renal and neurological manifestations.

(c) European Union Parliament has proposed a ban on export of Mercury from 1st July, 2011.

(d)to(f) A non-Governmental Organization, Toxics Link has conducted a study on usage of Mercury in health care sector, wherein they have documented the use of Mercury in various hospitals of the country.Use of Mercury is regulated by the Hazardous Waste Management and Handling Rules (1989) and the manufacture, storage and import of Hazardous Chemicals Rules (1989).